

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION AF-04

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 EUR-08 ARA-06 NSC-05 NSCE-00
PM-03 INR-05 CIAE-00 PRS-01 TRSE-00 OMB-01 SP-02
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R 050921Z MAY 77
FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4317
INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA
AMEMBASSY CAIRO
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY MOGADISCIO
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NAIROBI
AMEMBASSY SANA
AMCONSUL DJIBOUTI
USMISSION USUN

S E C R E T KHARTOUM 1537

LIMDIS

DEPT PASS USCINCEUR FOR POLAD

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, SU
SUBJECT: SUDANESE CONCERNED AT SOVIET MACHINATIONS

1. MY FAREWELL CALL ON PRIMIN RASHID AL-TAHIR COVERED MUCH SAME GROUND AS THAT WITH PRESIDENT NIMEIRI (REPORTED SEPARATELY). TAHIR EXPRESSED SATISFACTION WITH STATE OUR BILATERAL RELATIONS AND SAID HE THOUGHT FIRM BASIS LAID FOR MORE ACTIVE COOPERATION IN FUTURE. I REVIEWED WITH HIM STATUS OUR ONGOING PROGRAMS. NOTED NUMBER PRELIMINARY AID STUDIES ALREADY COMPLETED AND THAT CONCRETE USG ASSISTANCE COULD BE EXPECTED BECOME
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INCREASINGLY MANIFEST OVER NEXT 6-9 MONTHS. ALSO MENTIONED CIVILIAN AND MILITARY TRAINING PROGRAMS AND FAVORABLE USG ACTION ON C-130 REQUEST.

2. BULK OF CONVERSATION WAS ON AREA ISSUES, WITH TAHIR ECHOING NIMEIRI'S CONCERN RE SOVIET MACHINATIONS. HE CLAIMED PODGORNYY AND CASTRO HAD AGREED IN MOSCOW

THAT USSR SHOULD SUPPORT MENGISTU AND THAT THIS WOULD NOW BE CONFIRMED DURING MENGISTU'S CURRENT TRIP. SPEAKING PERSONALLY, I SAID SUCH OUTLOOK ADMITTEDLY TROUBLING BUT WONDERED WHETHER MENGISTU'S AIMS WERE NOT PRIMARILY DEFENSIVE, I.E., PRESERVATION ETHIOPIAN INTEGRITY. TAHIR AGREED AND SAID THAT FURTHERMORE MENGISTU WEAK INTERNALLY DUE ECONOMIC AND OTHER DIFFICULTIES. I NOTED THIS SITUATION SUGGESTED PATIENCE BEST COURSE IN DEALING WITH EPMG AND THAT ANY DEPARTURE FROM SUCH STATESMAN-LIKE ATTITUDE COULD GIVE ADDIS REGIME RALLYING POINT AGAINST ITS NEIGHBORS. TAHIR AGAIN AGREED BUT SAID HE WORRIED RE ETHIOPIAN PROCLIVITIES FOR TROUBLE-MAKING. ONLY RECENTLY SUDAN HAD RECEIVED INFO THAT SUDANESE COMMUNIST LEADERS HAD BEEN TRAVELING BACK AND FORTH BETWEEN LIBYA AND ETHIOPIA. CONTINUED FLOW SOVIET ARMS TO QADHAFI PARTICULARLY WORRISOME IN THIS CONTEXT. TAHIR SAID HE HAD RECENTLY COMPLAINED TO SOVIET AMBASSADOR THAT USSR NO LONGER INTERESTED IN MAINTAINING IDEALOGICALLY SOULD POSITION BUT HAD BECOME SIMPLE ARMS PEDDLER.

3. COMMENT: AS MOST SENIOR SUDANESE OFFICIAL WHO HAS RETAINED SOME CONTACT WITH SOVIETS HERE, TAHIR'S REMARKS UNDERSCORE SUDAN GOVT'S NEW, HARD ANTI-SOVIET STANCE AS PARTY LINE WITHIN THE NIMEIRI REGIME.
BREWER

NOTE BY OC/T: PASSED USCINCEUR.

SECRET

NNN

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